The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Redesign Board of the Highland Council** held in Committee Rooms 1 & 2, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on 27 August 2026 at 2pm.

Members present:

Mr R Bremner
Mr S Cameron (remote)
Mr A Christie
Mr J Edmondson
Mr J Finlayson (remote)
Mr D Fraser
Mr K Gowans
Mr M Green
Mrs J Hendry (remote)
Mrs B Jarvie (remote)
Mr G MacKenzie
Mr A MacKintosh
Mr D Macpherson
Mr J Murray (sub for Mr Lobban)
Mrs M Reid
Mrs T Robertson
Ms L Saggers
Mr J Gibson, UNISON
Mrs C A Stewart, GMB

Non-Members present:

Mr M Baird
Dr C Birt
Ms M Cockburn (remote)
Ms L Dundas
Mr L Fraser
Mr R Gale
Ms C Gillies
Mr A Graham
Ms M Hutchison (remote)
Mr H Morrison
Mr P Oldham
Ms C Ramsay (remote)
Mrs M Ross

Participating Officials:

Mr A Gunn, Assistant Chief Executive, Corporate
Mr D Scott, Chief Officer, Business Solutions
Mr M Bailey, Strategic Lead - Commercialisation
Mrs L Lallah, Business Development Lead
Mr S Bone, Business Development Lead
Mr A Yates, Strategic Lead, Environmental Health & Bereavement Services
Ms Percy-Bell, Principal Waste Management Officer
Mr B Gray, Strategic Lead, CCFM
Ms F MacBain, Senior Committee Officer

Mr R Bremner in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence
Leisgeulan

Apologies were intimated on behalf of Mr B Lobban and Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair.

2. Declarations of Interest
Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

There were none.

3. Minutes
Geàrr-chunntas

The Board **NOTED** the minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2025, which had been approved by the Council on 25 June 2026.

4. Exclusion of the Public
Às-dùnadh a' Phobaill

The Committee RESOLVED that, under Section 50A (4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public be excluded from the meeting for Item 5 on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 9 and 9 Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

5. Unique Visitor Experiences
Eòlasan Sònraichte do Luchd-tadhail

There was circulated to Members only Report No RDB/07/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Corporate.

Following discussion, the Board:

i. **APPROVED** the Full Business Case for the UVE at Smoo Cave; and
ii. **NOTED** the position on the work to identify additional UVEs across Highland.

6. Redesign Board Forward Plan
Plana Air Adhart a' Bhùird Ath-dhealbhachaidh

There was circulated Report No RDB/08/26 by the Chief Officer, Revenues & Commercialisation.

During discussion, it was asked that activity that resulted from the Roads and Amenities Workshop, and future Workshops, be scoped out and detailed in a programme of events to ensure Members were kept informed of actions. Similarly, assurance was sought and provided that after a Redesign Workshop, a report with recommendations would be brought to the Board for formal consideration. The impact Public Sector Reform might have on the Roads and Amenities review was queried.

The Board:

i. **NOTED** the work being delivered across the current Redesign Board programme; and
ii. **AGREED** to support the continued development of the future Redesign Board work programme.

7. Food in Schools Project
Pròiseact Biadh ann an Sgoiltean

There was circulated Report No RDB/09/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Corporate.

The Principal Waste Management Officer gave a presentation covering waste audits, reasons for food waste in schools, leftover lunch audits, expansion of food waste collections. and next steps.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- it was suggested that in relation to establishing the causes of food waste, it would be useful to analyse the food waste at schools with a higher percentage of pupils in receipt of free school meals against a school with a lower percentage. It was suggested the Working Group could investigate this, and various primary schools were suggested for comparison;
- clarification was provided that 'avoidable food' was food that could have been consumed;
- it was suggested that the provision of traditional crockery rather than plastic trays might encourage children to waste less food, and some of the challenges around this were summarised, such as the additional storage space required, and lack of seating in many secondary schools, meaning pupils were provided with disposable containers due to challenges around the provision of take-away food on crockery that required to be returned. It was suggested that when this type of challenge came to light, it should be reported to the Board. The importance of providing adequate seating for catering in secondary schools should be taken into consideration when new schools were designed. Staggered lunchbreaks were suggested as a possible solution;
- food monitors in school, similar to prefects, might be useful to encourage recycling;
- it was considered unfair that the Catering Service was bearing the financial burden of this food waste in schools, noting the impact on food in schools on education, something that might of value for future investigation. In this regard, the cost to Catering Services of educational food waste was queried and a rough estimate was provided of the equivalent business waste cost but, acknowledging that the costs had not been recently reviewed, this would be checked and provided to Mr Gibson outwith the meeting; and
- the challenges around providing unused food for community use were highlighted

The Board **NOTED**:

i. the progress to date; and
ii. the detailed Food in Schools Action Plan at Appendix 1 and 2 of this report.

8. Good Food Nation Plan
Plana airson Dùthaich a Tha Math a Thaobh Biadh

There was circulated Report No RDB/10/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Corporate.

The Board **NOTED** the progress to date.

9. Abandoned & Nuisance Vehicles
Carbadan a Tha Trèigte is nan Trioblaid

There was circulated Report No RDB/11/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- a more detailed timeline to demonstrate what could be expected and when was requested;

- information was sought and provided on progress with contractors for the vehicle storage compound, with a contract being drafted and engagement with procurement planned for September, two site being considered;
- appropriate communication with Members and the public was urged;
- it was suggested that vehicles suspected of being abandoned should have a notice put on them to indicate they were under investigation, and it was confirmed stickers were applied but were often removed;
- some Members felt the alignment of approach and communication between officers and Members could be improved, while others considered it was already in place. Reference was made to it being a live topic in a Cosla community wellbeing group;
- it was noted that a significant percentage of vehicles were wrongly suspected of being abandoned;
- it was felt the legislation was not sufficiently clear, and the matter had been raised at relevant Scottish Government forums. The Council Leader offered to raise the matter with the Scottish Government;
- consideration was given to the differences in approach if vehicles were abandoned on public versus private land, or in urban versus rural areas; and
- further suggestions included holding an amnesty and providing a car crushing service for a period of time, and the Council seeking more powers to issue fines, with the income ring-fenced to a particular cause, such as pothole repair. Attention was drawn to plans to run a social media awareness campaign, to reference the Council's need for full cost recovery as a deterrent, and to partnership working with the DVLA.

The Board:

i. **NOTED** the update from environmental health on abandoned vehicles including the data from 2025/26;
ii. **NOTED** the proposed improvements being considered to address abandoned vehicles by Environmental Health; and
iii. **NOTED** the role of the Council and wider partners in addressing nuisance vehicles and proposed improvements; and
iv. **AGREED** a detailed timeline be provided to the Board.

10. My Council
A' Chomhairle Agam

There was circulated Report No RDB/12/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Corporate.

The Board **NOTED**:

i. the updates against the My Council programme and future governance for the remaining project;
ii. the closure of the Web Project in line with agreed plan and timeline; and
iii. that updates on the work of the remaining project, MyHighland, along with updates on the continued work to improve customer experience and contact with the Council, will continue to be provided to the Redesign Board.

The meeting ended at 3.25pm.